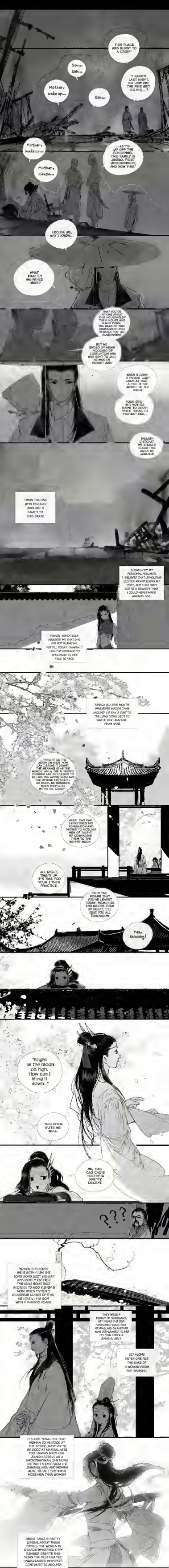
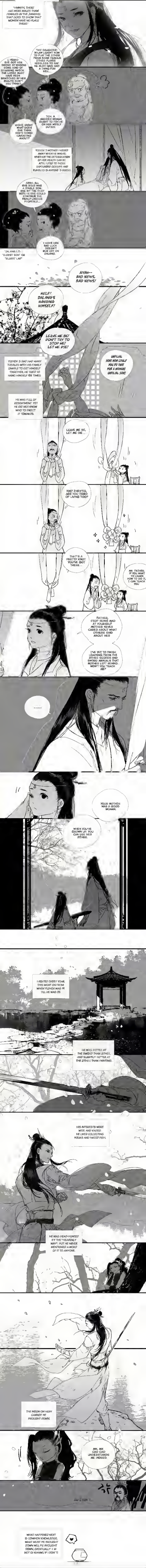
[Ibuki Satsuki's Comic Collection]

Translator/Typesetter: VOU
Proofreader/QC: justforreplying
Cleaner/Redrawer: Monodontidae
Raws: manhua.weibo.com/c/65546
^Artwork by 伊吹五月 (Ibuki Satsuki)


This place was burnt to a crisp!
Sob... sob...
Mother, wake up...
It rained last night, so how did the fire get so big...?
Sob...
Mother, wake up...
Mother, please...
...Let's lay off the gossiping. This family is jinxed. First imprisonment, and now this!
Excuse me, may I know...
What exactly happened here?
Haa? You're asking about this household? Their house was burnt down! The head of this household used to work for the government
But he ended up being accused of corruption and was sent to jail! He was an honest man!
When it rains it pours. Just look at that. A fire in the middle of the night!
Poor girl. Her mother burnt to death while trying to protect her.
Enough chitchat. We should clear this mess up quickly.
I was the one who reduced Xiao-Mei's family to this state.
Clouded by my personal feelings, I believed that upholding justice meant using my fists, but that only led to a tragedy that I could never make amends for...
Yizhen repeatedly assured me that she did not blame me. Yet till today I haven't had the courage to apologize to her face to face.
March is a fine month. Whenever March came around, I'd pay a visit to the Long Song Sect to watch her -and him- from afar.
"Bright as the moon on high. How can I bring it down?" The meaning is as the words imply, the author's desires are described to be like the moon, high and far beyond his reach. As such, he wonders when they'll be within his grasp.
Here, Cao Cao expresses his admiration and desire to acquire men of talent by comparing them to the bright moon.
All right, time's up. It's time for your zither practice.
Copy the poems that you've learnt today. Memorize and recite them by heart, I'll quiz you all tomorrow.
Yes, Shixiong!
"Bright as the moon on high. How can I bring it down..."
This poem suits me well.
Mn, this Cao Cao's poetry is pretty decent.
???
Yizhen's parents were both from the Long Song Sect. His dad apparently entered the Long Song Sect in order to woo Yizhen's mom. When Yizhen's granddad learnt of this, he beat up his son with a bamboo board.
They were a family of scholars, yet being the old-fashioned man that he was, his granddad was displeased to see his son enter a Jianghu sect.
Let alone enter one for the sake of a woman from the Jianghu.
It's one thing for that woman to be good at the zither, another to be good at martial arts too. Having made her Jianghu debut as a swordswoman, she hung out with those from the Jianghu, men and women alike. In fact, she knew more men than women!
Great Tang is pretty liberal about these things. The women in turn did whatever they pleased. Despite this being the best era yet, unwarranted whispers continued to abound:


"HMMPH, THERE ARE MORE MALES THAN FEMALES IN THE JIANGHU, THAT GOES TO SHOW THAT WOMEN HAVE NO PLACE THERE."
THIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW LEARNT HOW TO PLAY THE ZITHER FROM SOME FAMOUS ZITHER PLAYER. NEEDLESS TO SAY HE MUST HAVE HAD A THING FOR HER...
I HEARD SHE GOT HER SWORD BY WINNING SOME KIND OF SPARRING MATCH. THE LOSER MUST HAVE BEEN BEWITCHED BY HER BEAUTY, DON'T YOU THINK?
TCH, A MARRIED WOMAN OUGHT TO FOCUS ON HER WIFELY DUTIES.
RIGHT, RIGHT. WHAT DOES SHE THINK SHE'S DOING CAVORTING ABOUT?
YIZHEN'S MOTHER PASSED AWAY WHEN HE WAS 10. WHETHER THE DETERIORATION OF HER HEALTH CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THOSE UNFOUNDED GOSSIPS AND RUMOURS IS ANYONE'S GUESS.
AIYAH, ALL SHE BORE WAS A SINGLE SON. SHE BIT THE DUST BEFORE SHE COULD CONTINUE THE FAMILY LINEAGE PROPERLY...
I HOPE HER BAD LUCK DOESN'T RUB OFF ON DALANG.
"DALANG大郎: "ELDEST SON" OR "ELDEST LAD"
AIYAH-- BAD NEWS, BAD NEWS!
HELP! DALANG'S HANGING HIMSELF!
LEAVE ME BE! DON'T TRY TO STOP ME! LET ME DIE!
UNFILIAL SON! HOW COULD YOU DO THAT FOR A WOMAN! UNFILIAL SON!
YIZHEN'S DAD HAD MANY TUSSLES WITH HIS FAMILY. UNABLE TO GET HIMSELF TOGETHER, HE TRIED TO HANG HIMSELF 108 TIMES.
HE WAS FULL OF RESENTMENT, YET HE DID NOT KNOW WHO TO DIRECT IT TOWARDS.
LEAVE ME BE, LET ME DIE...
HMP? ZHEN'ER, ARE YOU TIRED OF LIVING TOO?
THAT'S A PRETTY KNOT YOU'VE GOT THERE...
MN, FATHER. IF YOU WANT TO LEARN HOW TO DO IT, I CAN TEACH YOU.
FATHER, STOP BEING MAD AT YOURSELF. MOTHER NEVER CARED ABOUT WHAT OTHERS SAID ABOUT HER.
I'VE YET TO FINISH LEARNING FROM THE ZITHER SCORES AND SWORD MANUALS THAT MOTHER LEFT BEHIND. WON'T YOU TEACH ME?
......
YOUR MOTHER WAS A GOOD WOMAN.
WHEN YOU'VE GROWN UP, YOU CAN USE HER ZITHER.
I VISITED EVERY YEAR. THIS WENT ON FROM WHEN YIZHEN WAS 14 TILL HE WAS 25.
HE WAS BETTER AT THE SWORD THAN ZITHER, AND SLIGHTLY BETTER AT THE ZITHER THAN PAINTING.
HIS INTERESTS WERE WIDE AND VARIED. HE LIKED COLLECTING BOOKS AND HATED FISH.
HE WAS HEAD-HUNTED BY THE "HEAVENLY WAY" BUT HE NEVER MENTIONED A WORD OF IT TO ANYONE.
THE MOON ON HIGH CANNOT BE BROUGHT DOWN.
MN, MN. CAO CAO UNDERSTANDS ME INDEED.
No I don't...
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE. WHAT MUST BE BROUGHT DOWN WILL BE BROUGHT DOWN, EVENTUALLY. I'M NOT QI NIANWU IF I DON'T!

※ For further details, refer to <Lofty Mountains, Flowing Waters>, Part Eleven of <Mountains and Rivers> and the Double Seventh Festival Drabble.

Translator's Notes

"Bright as the moon on high. How can I bring it down."

A Short Song (短歌行)

Composed by Cao Cao 曹操(155—220), a powerful Chinese warlord who rose to power at the end of the Han Dynasty (206 – 220). Known for his keen intellect and cunning, he was one of the central figures during the Three Kingdoms period. Basically, he was a super important and super famous historical figure who effectively laid the foundations for what was to become the State of Wei (魏). He was also an accomplished poet.

Translation by Xu Yuanchong

对酒当歌，人生几何？
譬如朝露，去日苦多。
慨当以慷，忧思难忘。
何以解忧？唯有杜康。
青青子衿，悠悠我心。
但为君故，沉吟至今。
呦呦鹿鸣，食野之苹。
我有嘉宾，鼓瑟吹笙。
明明如月，何时可掇？
忧从中来，不可断绝。
越陌度阡，枉用相存。
契阔谈讌，心念旧恩。
月明星稀，乌鹊南飞。
绕树三匝，何枝可依？
山不厌高，海不厌深。
周公吐哺，天下归心。

We should sing before wine.
For how long can life last?
Like dew on morning fine,
So many days have passed
How can we be unbound
By grief which weighed us down?
Grief can only be drowned
In wine of good renown.
Talents with collars blue,
For you I pine away.
So much I long for you,
My heart aches night and day!
How gaily call the deer
While grazing in the shade!
When I have talents here,
Let lute and lyre be played!
Bright as the moon on high,
How can I bring it down?
Grief from within comes nigh,
Ceaselessly it flows on.
Across the fields and lanes,
You are kind to come here.
Talking of far-off plains,
You cherish friendship dear
The moon's bright and stars nice,
The crows in southward flight
They circle the trees twice;
There's no branch to alight.
With crags high mountains rise,
With water the sea's deep.
With the help of the wise,
An ordered world we'll keep.